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THE
WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. I.]

PICTON, JUNE 1, 1846.

[No. 8.]

IDOLATRY OF SECTARIANISM.

For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, you shall not do this thing. 2 Kings 17: 12.

According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. Jer. 2: 28.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. 1 John 5: 21.

Nothing that I have spoken or written during the life of this monthly Witness has occasioned so much enquiry and so much alarm as a sentence composed of three simple words found on the ninth page in my general address. 'The offensive words are, 'sects worship Idols.' A recantation, or an explanation, or the strong and well founded assurance of logic and reason, has been called for and demanded in the most serious earnest in different ways and at diverse times, publicly and privately. For more than the half of three hundred and sixty-five days I have listened to every query and objection with all the candor I could afford, being well assured I would lose nothing in hearing impartially all that could be said against anything penned by myself or others, and fully determined to publicly counteract whatever of error, I, through haste or mistaken view, had formerly published to the world.

Even some of my most ardent friends have been found on the list of objectors and complainists. Not that they supposed I wielded a wrong sword, but that I struck too weighty a blow.— The weapon they acknowledge was of the right material, and of the proper shape and temper, but used with more dexterity and courage than the occasion required.

Willing to cultivate patience, and not willing to be hardened against penitence, I have until now declined giving my views, that I might by a very full hearing of what all parties had to say be the more able to perceive the pernicious tendency of my words, and that I might with the greater deliberation make the necessary amendment, apology, or retraction.

Since it is easy to err, and since it is noble to confess a fault.